

To Members of the California State Assembly:

I am signing AB 2182 which would add the following to the list of “professional persons” who may provide to minors medical treatment and counseling for drug and alcohol related problems: a marriage and family therapist registered intern, a psychological assistant, and an associate clinical social worker.

In California, over 200,000 young people between the ages of 12 and 17 need help with a substance abuse problem. Research asserts that the earlier young people start using drugs or alcohol the more likely they are to develop a disorder and continue as adults.

During the course of analyzing this legislation it was discovered that certain provisions in this bill of the existing statute of Family Law Code are inconsistent with and invalidated by federal law. I instruct the Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs to resolve this issue through legislation during the next legislative session.

In addition, I strongly encourage the California Health and Human Services Agency and the Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs to work with the Board of Behavioral Science to increase the educational and training requirement for all professionals providing counseling to those individuals with alcohol and other drug problems.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger